

REMARKS

This application has been amended in a manner believe to place it in condition for allowance at the time of the next Official Action.

Responsive to the restriction requirement, applicants hereby affirm the election of Group I, claim 3, drawn to a method of making a chromium oxide passivation layer on a metal material surface, without traverse.

Claim 3 is amended. Support for the amendment to claim 3 may be found at page 5, line 21 to page 6, line 6 and page 11, lines 10-16. Claims 3 and 4 are pending. Claim 4 is withdrawn as being directed to a non-elected invention.

The Official Action rejected claim 3 under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. In particular, the Official Action states that it is unclear if "metal material surface" refers to the surface of the metal material and which surface has the recited surface roughness.

Claim 3 is amended to recite coating chromium onto a metal material with a particular surface roughness, and subsequently applying a heat treatment to the chromium coated metal material under an oxidizing atmosphere to obtain the present invention. Accordingly, applicants believe claim 3 is amended in a manner that recites the steps of the method and the surface roughness in a definite manner.

Therefore, applicants respectfully request that the indefiniteness rejection be withdrawn.

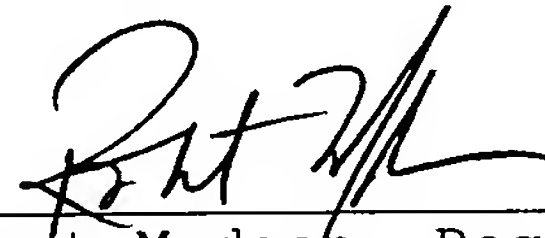
No prior art rejections were imposed by the Official Action.

In view of the above, applicants believe the application is in condition for allowance at the time of the next Official Action. Allowance and passage to issue on that basis is therefore respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

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